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OPTIMIZATION OF AUTO-PILOT EQUATIONS
FOR RAPID ESTIMATION OF HELICOPTER CONTROL SETTINGS

Interim Technical Report No.1

by Han-sheng Chen and

David A. Peters

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OPTIMIZATION OF AUTO-PILOT EQUATIONS
FOR RAPID ESTIMATION OF HELICOPTER CONTROL SETTINGS

ABSTRACT

An automatic feedback system, based on continuous monitoring of control loads, is used to find the control settings that are required to obtain a given flight condition of a helicopter rotor. A program is developed that searches automatically for the optimum gains and time constants of the system. Satisfactory results are achieved for given conditions as an example.

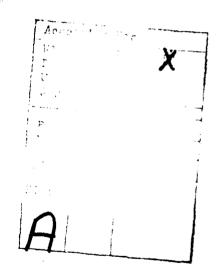


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OPTIMIZATION OF AUTO-PILOT EQUATIONS FOR RAPID ESTIMATION OF HELICOPTER CONTROL SETTINGS

1. INTRODUCTION

Previous work in the area of helicopter stability and vibrations has shown that an accurate knowledge of the helicopter control settings is a necessary prerequisite to the determination of blade damping or rotor loads. The mathematical formulation of this problem involves solution of a set of non-linear differential equations for the periodic, equilibrium solution. This, in itself, is fairly straightforward; but the problem is complicated by the fact that the unknown control settings appear as forcing functions (and sometimes as coefficients) in the equations. These control settings must be chosen so as to satisfy certain integral constraints on the solution, namely that the helicopter be flying in trim at the desired flight condition.

In reference 1, a solution to the above problem is formulated whereby a set of control equations (called an "automatic pilot") is used to bring the controls to appropriate values simultaneously with the solution of the blade equations. The coefficients of this controller (two gains and two time constants) are chosen by trial and error to give the most rapid convergence to the desired settings.

Although the results in reference (1) are very satisfactory, there are several aspects of the problem which merit further study. First, the choice of parameters in (1) was made on the basis only of a qualitative assessment of when the controls had converged. A more quantitative (and automated) approach is needed before the method can be extended to general problems. Second, several errors have been found in the equations of motion of (1). Thus, the results need to be verified for an accurate set of equations. Third, the

results in (1) do not include a study of convergence or optimality conditions (local minima, etc.). Therefore, a more complete analysis is warranted.

In this paper, the corrected equations are studied in more detail in terms of convergence properties. Whereas reference (1) concentrates on loss of stability in extreme conditions (stall, high advance ratio, low torsional frequency), the present work concentrates on the controller characteristics in the normal operating range. To this end, a program is developed that searches automatically for the optimum gains and time constants of the system.

2. MATHEMATICAL DESCRIPTION

2.1. Rotor Equations

The physical and mathematical models used here are the same as in reference (1) with the exception that certain algebraic errors in (1) have been corrected. The physical model, given in Figure 1, shows a single section of a slender, rigid, inelastic blade, which is hinged in the torsional and out-of-plane directions at the center of rotation with restraints, $K_{\mathcal{G}}$ and $K_{\mathcal{G}}$. The blade is assumed to flap with angle \mathcal{G} , and to feather with angle \mathcal{G} . Fixed coordinates are defined with the Z-direction along the rotor shaft and with the X-direction opposite to the direction of flight. The blade rotates about the shaft in the XY plane with constant angular velocity \mathcal{G} . The rotor shaft angle \mathcal{V} , which is measured from down wind, is in radians. The blade position with respect to the fixed coordinate system is thus defined by the three angles \mathcal{V} , \mathcal{G} , and \mathcal{C} , which uniquely define the blade position.

As the result of the derivation and simplication, we have

$$\frac{\pi^*}{B} + p^*_{B} = \overline{F}_{B} + (p^* - 1) \beta_{pc} \qquad (1)$$

$$\frac{\pi^*}{B} + B = \overline{M}_{c} - (\omega_{c}^* - 1)(B - B_{o} - B_{o} \sin 2t) \qquad (2)$$

The aerodynamic force F_{β} and the moment about the pitch hinge M_0 are obtained from piecewise linear, quasi-steady strip theory,

$$F_{s} = \frac{1}{2} f c d\alpha U_{f}^{2} (E - U_{f}/U_{f}) + \frac{1}{5} f \alpha c' dU_{f}^{2} (E + \Delta B - \phi)$$
(3)

$$M_{0} = -\frac{1}{32} f \alpha c' dU_{f}^{2} (E + \Delta B - \phi) + \frac{1}{2} f \alpha c' dU_{f}^{2} C_{,n}$$
(4)
Combining (1),(2),(3), and (4), we have

$$\beta + \frac{\pi}{8}(1 + \mu \sin 4) \beta + [p' + (1 + \mu \sin 4)(\frac{\pi}{8}\mu \cos 4) - \frac{\pi}{4}\pi i)]\beta - \frac{\pi}{8}(1 + \mu \sin 4)^{2}\theta = \frac{\pi}{8}[\frac{\pi}{4}(1 + \mu \sin 4)] + (p' - 1)\beta_{pc} (5)$$

$$\theta + \frac{\pi^{2}}{126}e^{2}(1 + \mu \sin 4)\theta + \omega_{0}^{2}\theta - \frac{\pi^{2}}{8}e^{2}(1 + \mu \sin 4)C_{m}\theta - (\omega_{0}^{2} - 1)(\theta_{c} + \theta_{s} \sin 4)\theta + \theta_{c} \cos 4) + \frac{\pi^{2}}{128}e^{2}(1 + \mu \sin 4)\beta = \frac{\pi^{2}}{6}e^{2}(1 + \mu \sin 4)\beta - \frac{\pi^{2}}{6}e^{2}(1 + \mu \sin 4)\beta \cos 4\theta + \frac{\pi^{2}}{6}e^{2}(1 + \mu \sin 4)\theta + \frac{\pi^{2}}{6}e^{2}(1 + \mu \sin 4)\beta \cos 4\theta + \frac{\pi^{2}}{6}e^{2}(1 + \mu \sin 4)\theta + \frac{$$

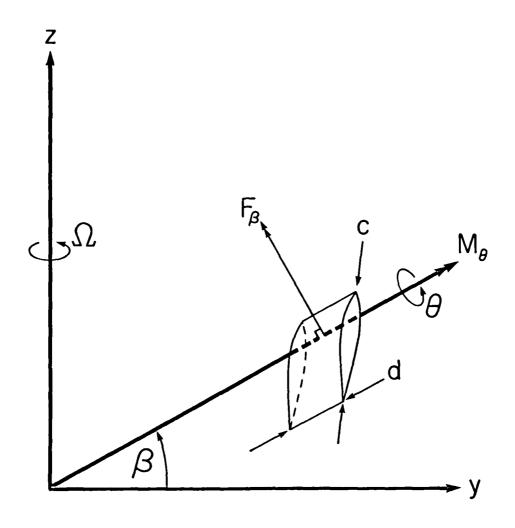


Figure 1. Schematic of Blade Model

2.2 Auto-pilot Equations

In order to simulate the trimmed flight of a helicopter rotor, the rotor is maintained at a fixed value of the thrust coefficient with forward speed. Furthermore, the cyclic pitch is adjusted to suppress first harmonic cyclic flapping $(\beta = \beta = 0)$ and, therefore, to eliminate rotor hub moments.

The following auto-pilot equations, taken from reference (1) represent the strategy whereby the controls (\mathcal{C}_{ϵ} , \mathcal{C}_{ϵ} , \mathcal{C}_{ϵ}) are adjusted in order to reach the desired thrust (T=T_{ϵ}) and moments (FM=FM_{ϵ}=0, RM=RM_{ϵ}=0). The cross-coupling, B, accounts for the coupling between roll and pitch in a helicopter rotor.

$$T_{\cdot} \dot{\theta} + C = A_{\cdot} (T_{\cdot} \cdot T) \tag{7}$$

$$T_{c} = A_{c} \left[(PM - PM_{c}) + B(RM - RM_{c}) \right]$$
 (8)

$$T, \ddot{e} + e = A, [(RM - RM_c) + B(PM - PM_c)]$$
 (9)

The final form of the auto-pilot equations are found from evaluation of the instantaneous thrust and moments (T,PM,RM) in terms of the flapping angle, $\pmb{\beta}$.

$$\theta = -\frac{\dot{\theta}}{\overline{c}} - \frac{A \dot{P}}{C_{i} \sigma} \beta + \frac{A \cdot \overline{C}_{c}}{\overline{C}_{c}}$$

$$\theta_{s} = -\frac{\dot{\theta}}{C_{i}} - \frac{A_{i} (\dot{P}^{2} - 1)}{C_{i} \sigma} \left[\frac{E(\dot{P}^{2} - 1) \sin \Psi}{\sigma} + \frac{E}{\beta} \dot{C}_{c} - \cos \Psi \right] \beta$$

$$+ A_{i} \frac{\overline{C}_{mi}}{C_{i}}$$

$$\theta_{c} = -\frac{\dot{\theta}}{C_{i}} - \frac{A_{i} (\dot{P}^{2} - 1)}{C_{i} \sigma} \left[\frac{E(\dot{P}^{2} - 1) \cos \Psi}{\sigma} + \frac{E}{\beta} \dot{C}_{mi} + \sin \Psi \right] \beta$$

$$- A_{i} \frac{\overline{C}_{mi}}{C_{i} \sigma}$$
(12)

2.3. Method of Solution

For the whole system, we combine all the above equations, and write them in matrix form, p^*

and write them in matrix form,

$$\begin{vmatrix}
\beta \\
C \\
C
\end{vmatrix}$$

$$\begin{vmatrix}
-\frac{z}{E} \\
-\frac{z}{E}
\end{vmatrix}$$

$$\begin{vmatrix}
-\frac{z}{E}
\end{vmatrix}$$

$$-\frac{z}{E}$$

$$\begin{vmatrix}
-\frac{z}{E}
\end{vmatrix}$$

$$-\frac{z}{E}$$

$$-\frac{z}{E$$

$$\begin{bmatrix}
-\frac{\lambda \sigma}{E}(1+\mu \sin \psi) - \frac{\sigma c}{32} \phi(1+\mu \sin \psi) + (p^2-1)\beta pc \\
\frac{\sigma c^2}{Ec^2} c_m \lambda(1+\mu \sin \psi) + \frac{\sigma c^2}{128E^2} c_m \phi(1+\mu \sin \psi) + (\omega_c^2-1)(E_c + E_s \sin \psi + E_c \cos \psi)
\end{bmatrix}$$

$$C$$

$$C$$

$$(13)$$

$$\begin{cases}
\frac{E_{c}}{B_{s}} & \frac{1}{C_{c}} & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\
0 & \frac{1}{C_{c}} & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\
0 & 0 & \frac{1}{C_{c}} & 0 & 0 & 0 \\
0 & 0 & \frac{1}{C_{c}} & 0 & 0 & 0 \\
0 & 0 & -1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0
\end{cases}$$

$$\begin{cases}
\frac{A_{c}P'B}{C_{c}} + \frac{A_{c}C_{r}}{C_{c}} \\
-\frac{A_{c}P'B}{C_{c}} + \frac{A_{c}C_{r}}{C_{c}} \\
-\frac{A_{c}P'B}{C_{c}} + \frac{A_{c}C_{r}}{C_{c}}
\end{cases}$$

$$\begin{cases}
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The following blade parameters and flight conditions are used in equations (13) and (14) for the numerical examples to follow.

$$k = 0.3$$

 $k = 5.0$
 $k = 0.05$
 $k = 0.05$
 $k = 0.1$

```
C_{\tau}/6\alpha = 0.0050/0.314 = 0.0159
        C. /50=0.0
        Cm/54=0.0
        P_s = 0.0
        Wc =0.2
        \lambda = \left\{ \frac{1}{2} \left[ \left[ \mu^4 \cdot C_1^4 \right]^{\frac{1}{2}} - \mu^4 \right] \right\}^{\frac{1}{2}} = 8.33012 \times 10^{-3}
        \beta_{i}=0.0
       \omega_{e}=3.5 , P=1.12 , \dot{\phi} neglected
        We select \beta, \beta, \epsilon, \epsilon, \epsilon, \epsilon, \epsilon, \epsilon, \epsilon, and \epsilon as the state variables
and rewrite equations (13) and (14) in first-order state variable
form.
    \dot{Y}(1)=Y(2)
    Y(2) = -[1.2544 + (0.3\cos x - 0.2)(0.625 + 0.1875\sin x)]Y(1)
           -(0.625+0.1875sinx)Y(2)
           +(0.625+0.1875sinx)(1+0.3sinx)Y(3)
           +0.025(0.625+0.1875sinx)Y(4)
           -(0.00520632+0.00156189sinx)
    Y(3)=Y(4)
    \dot{Y}(4) = -(0.625 + 0.1875 sinx)(0.25)Y(1)
           -12.25Y(3)
-(0.625+0.1875sinx)(0.25)Y(4)
           +11.25Y(5)
           +11.25 sinx *Y(9)
                                                                                      (15)
           +11.25\cos x *Y(7)
    Y(5) = Y(6)
    \dot{Y}(6) = -(A_c/T_c) *0.25088Y(1) - Y(6)/T_c + T_c (0.0159)
    Y(7) = Y(8)
    \dot{Y}(8) = -(A_1/T_1)(0.05088)(0.4070\cos x + \sin x)Y(1)
           -Y(8)/T
    Y(9)=Y(10)
    \dot{Y}(10) \approx -(A_1/T_1)(0.05088)(0.40704 \sin x - \cos x)Y(1)
            -Y(10)/T
where
           x= \( \nu^{-}
           Y(1)=3
           Y(2)=3
           Y(3)= €
           Y(4)= 8
           Y(5) = \mathcal{E}
```

 $Y(6) = \dot{e}_{c}$ $Y(7) = \dot{e}_{c}$

Y(8)= &

Y(9)= C,

Y(10)= 6

We solve the first-order differential equation set (15) by the Runge-Kutta program provided by IBM Scientific Subroutine Package (SSP). Figure 2 shows a typical response of a stable system with all zero initial conditions.

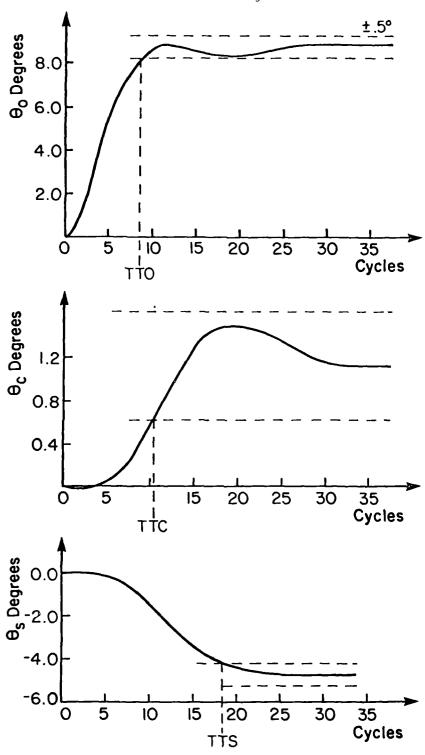


Figure 2
Typical Time History

3. OPTIMALITY CRITERIA AND SEARCH FOR OPTIMUM POINTS

3.1. Optimality Criteria

For a system to be optimal, some kinds of criteria must be used to decide on the utility of the solution.

In our case, for a stable system, the angles $\mathcal{C}_{\!\!\!\!c}$, $\mathcal{C}_{\!\!\!c}$, will ultimately reach the final, stable position. It is our desire that these final values are reached in as short a time as possible. Thus, we choose as a cost function the time required (i.e. the number of rotor revolutions required) for all controls to be within $\pm 0.5^{\circ}$ of their final values. To do this we designate TT_{c} , TT_{c} , and TT_{3} as the respective times for $\mathcal{C}_{\!\!\!\!c}$, $\mathcal{C}_{\!\!\!c}$, and $\mathcal{C}_{\!\!\!c}$ to converge to within $\pm 0.5^{\circ}$ of a final value; and we designate the largest of these three as Tmax , Figure 2. Then, we use the minimum of Tmax as the optimality criterion.

3.2. Search for Optimum Points

As we have seen in previous sections, it would be quite difficult to obtain explicit expression for TT_o, TT_c, TT_c, and Tmax. Furthermore, analytical derivatives of Tmax with respect to A_o, A_i, T_c, and T_i are not readily available, so we use the derivative-free method in our search program. That is, we evaluate functions only; and no derivatives are involved.

The controller used here has four parameters that must be considered: Ao, A,, To, T. The procedure is as follows,

- (1) A base point is chosen and Tmax is evaluated.
- (2) Local searches are made by stepping A_c a distance 0.2 to each side (M1 direction in Table 1) and by evaluating Tmax to see if a lower Tmax is obtained.
- (3) If there is no Tmax decrease, we do the same to M2 direction, and then to M3, M4, ..., until M42 direction, or until a decrease is found, see Table 1. We select 0.2 as increment for A, 0.3π for T_0 , 0.2π for T_0 .
- (4) If there is a Tmax decrease, we then use the new point as a base

Increments of Parameters

Direction	Ac	Α,	Tu× た	T, * 7\$	
M1	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	
M2	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	Change one parame-
м3	0.0	0.0	0.3		ter at a time.
M4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	
M 5	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	
M6	0.2	-0.2	0.0	0.0	
M?	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.0	
м8	0.2	0.0	-0.3	0.0	
M9	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.2	Change two parame-
M10	0.2	0.0	0.0	-0.2	ters at a time.
M11	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.0	
M12	0.0	0.2	-0.3	0.0	
M13	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.2	
M14	0.0	0.2	0.0	-0.2	
M 1 5 M 1 6	0.0	0.0	0.3 0.3	0.2 -0.2	
M17	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.0	
M18	0.2		-0.3	0.0	
M19	0.2	-0.2	0.3	0.0	
M20	-0.2	0.2	0.3	0.0	
M21	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.2	
M22	0.2	0.2	0.0	-0.2	21
M23	0.2	-0.2	0.0	0.2	Change three para-
M24 M25	-0.2 0.2	0.2 0.0	0.0	0.2	meters at a time.
M26	0.2	0.0	0.3 0.3	0.2 -0.2	
M27	0.2	0.0	-0.3	0.2	
M28	-0.2	0.0	0.3	0.2	
M29	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.2	
M30	0.0	0.2	0.3	-0.2	
M31	0.0	0.2	-0.3	0.2	
M32	0.0	-0.2	0.3	0.2	
M33	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	
M34	0.2	0.2	0.3	-0.2	
M35	0.2	0.2	-0.3	0.2	
M36	0.2	-0.2	0.3	0.2	
M37	-0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	Change four para-
м38	0.2	0.2	-0.3	-0.2	meters at a time.
M39	0.2	-0.2	0.3	-0.2	
M40	-0.2	0.2	0.3	-0.2	
M41	0.2	-0.2	-0.3	0.2	
M42	-0.2	0.2	-0.3	0.2	

Table 1 Searching Directions

point and go back to (2). If there is no decrease in Tmax, then we assume that a local minimum point is found.

A flow diagram illustrating the above procedure is given in Figure 3.

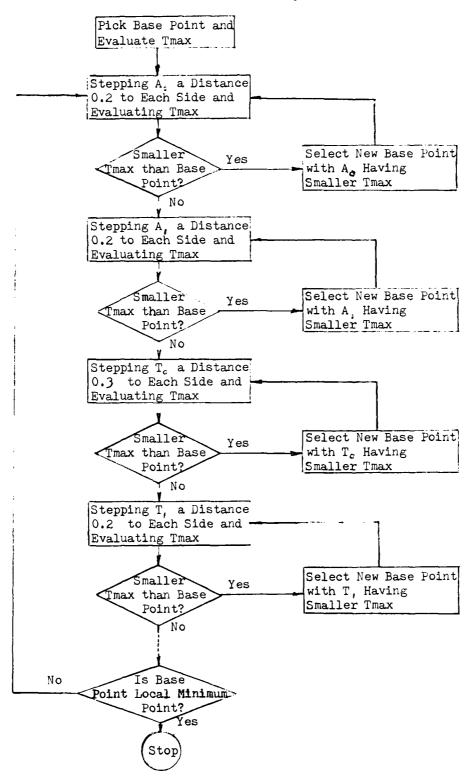


Figure 3 Flow Diagram

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Stepping Distance

Although, in principle, a smaller stepping distance implies a more accurate convergence, from an engineering point of view, it is often more efficient to take larger steps such that a meaningful change in cost function can be found. Thus, in this case, we have used steps 0.2 for A, and A, 0.3 π for T_o, and 0.2 π for T_f.

4.2. Choice of Stable Points as Starting Points

For the starting points, the system must be stable, otherwise Tmax will be equal to infinity (in our program and is approximately equal to 40 cycles), and the search program and the s

4.3. Local Minimum and Global Minimum

Since local minima are potent is possible, several different starting points are considered. I hould these converge to several different local minima, the global minimum can be chosen from the local ones.

4.4. Optimality Criteria

The minimum Tmax is selected as the optimality criterion in our case. As we can see in Figure 4 and 5, however, the difference in Tmax between two local optima is only 1.28 cycles. On the other hand, one optimum has larger oscillations (in the steady-state) than the other. Therefore, it might be good in future studies to consider these oscillations in the selection of optimality criteria.

4.5. Optimal Control Setting

With blade parameters and flight conditions as shown in pages 7 and 8, and with the minimum Tmax criterion, the optimal control setting is as follow.

 $A_a = 2.6$

 $A_{i} = 3.6$

T. = 2.1 TC

T, = 0.6 T

and

 $TT_e = 4.85$ cycles

 $TT_{\ell} = 5.29$ cycles

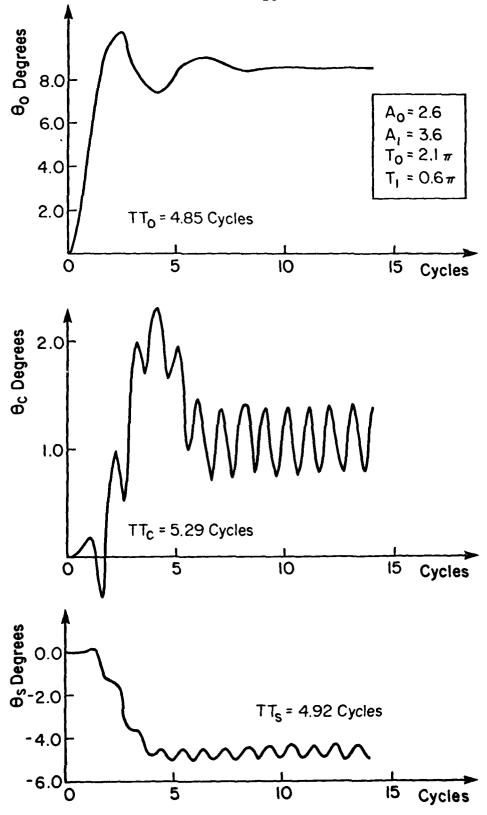


Figure 4. Time History

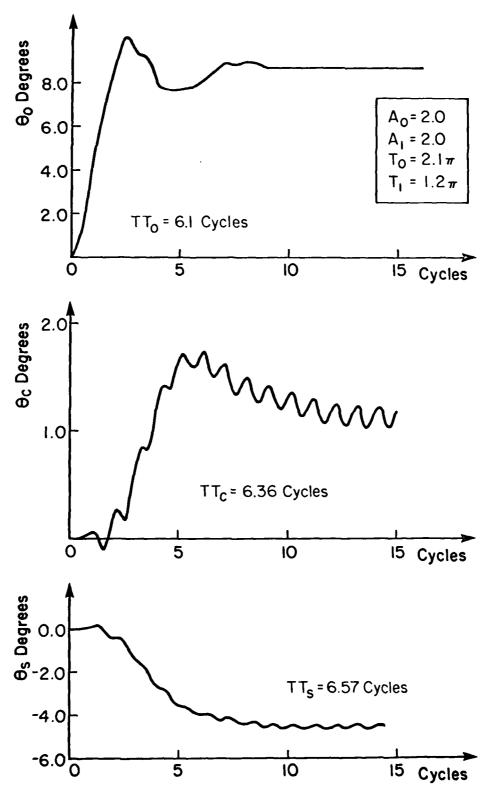


Figure 5. Time History

 $TT_s = 4.92$ cycles $Tmax = TT_c = 5.29$ cycles $\theta_s(\infty) = 8.5627$ degree $\theta_c(\infty) = 1.1347$ degree $\theta_c(\infty) = -4.5841$ degree

The optimum results (Figure 4) can be compared with another local optimal (Figure 5). For the optimum settings, in Figure 4, the low cyclic time constant $(0.6\,\pi)$ causes $\pm 0.5^{\circ}$ oscillations which are on the boundary of the accepted level. In Figure 5, a larger time constant is chosen (T, = $1.2\,\pi$). This reduces the oscillations to $\pm 0.1^{\circ}$, but also necessitates lower gains (A_o, A_i reduced from 2.6,3.6 to 2.0, 2.0). The lower gains imply that the over-all convergence of the mean is slowed, making the mean the critical criterion for convergence. It should be noted that, for an analysis with more than one blade (we only have one), the oscillations would greatly decrease since the rotor would filter out once-per-rev from the controller. This would alter the optimum in Figure 4 (were $\pm 0.5^{\circ}$ is critical) but would not greatly change the optimum in Figure 5 since the oscillations are not driving the solution.

In conclusion, we can say that the gains and time constants found in Reference (1) are very close to the optimum found here. On the other hand, the research in this report shows that there are two local optima with nearly equal convergence. A comparison of these indicates that are improved optimality criterion might be obtained from a more stringent penalty on steady-state oscillations.

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6. NOMENCLATURE

А	area of the blade section
a	slope of the lift curve
A _o ,A _l	gains
В	coupling
c	blade chord, m
c	nondimensionalized blade chord, $\frac{c}{r}$
C_{ℓ}	blade lift coefficient
<u> </u>	normalized blade moment coefficient, $\frac{C_L}{\sigma a}$
c_{m}	blade moment coefficient
$\overline{C}_{\mathfrak{m}}$	normalized blade moment coefficient, $\frac{c_m}{\sigma a}$
Cs	root moment coefficient
\overline{c}_{s}	normalized root moment coefficient, $\frac{c}{\sigma}$
$\mathtt{C}_{\mathbf{T}}^{}$	blade thrust coefficient
$\overline{\mathtt{C}}_{\mathtt{T}}$	normalized blade thrust coefficient, $\frac{C_m}{\sqrt{a}}$
đ	length of blade section
е	inertial ratio, $\int \frac{I_x}{I_y + mr^2}$
FA	lift force
Fa	nondimensionalized lift force, $\frac{V_{a}r}{\Omega^{4}(I_{v}+mr^{2})}$
h	constant term in algorithmic Runge-Kauta
	method
I	total inertia, $I_{Y} + mr^{2}$
I _x ,I _y	blade section inertias, kg-m ²
J	total number of periods of integration

k reduced frequency, $\frac{1}{2} \frac{c}{r}$

 K_{O}, K_{1} rate gains, such that $\frac{1}{K}$ is number of radians to full application of linear control predictions

K spring stiffness at the center of rotation

Kg flapping spring constant

K₆ torsional spring constant

b number of blades

lift on blade

L rolling moment at hub

m mass of the blade section, number of controls

M pitching moment at hub

Me moment about the pitch axis

 \overline{M}_{θ} nondimensionalized moment about the pitch, $\frac{M_{\theta}}{L_{\nu}\Omega^{2}}$

N number of second-order degrees of freedom

P dimensionless rotating flapping frequency

 $\mathbf{P}_{\mathbf{q}}$ slope of the pitch moment coefficient

PM pitch moment desired

RM_o roll moment desired

r blade radial coordinate

S steady root moment on hub in rotating system

t time

Т thrust on the blade U total velocity of blade section relative to air vertical component of air speed horizontal component of air speed V_x, V_y, V_z components of v at the blade's e.g. vertical component of wind speed U velocity of the blade's center of gravity d angle of attack critical angle of attack α_{c} à angular velocity of blade at center of gravity axidyidz components of & flapping angle, rad., $\beta_0 + \beta_s \sin \gamma$ + Ac cos x β₀,β_s,β_c γ components of flapping lock number, $\frac{4 \text{pacdr}^3}{\text{Iy+mr}^2}$ θ total pitch angle, rad, $\Theta_a + \Theta_b + \Theta_s \sin \psi$ + Oc cosy $\Theta_{\mathbf{e}}$ elastic portion of pitch angle Θ_{S} , Θ_{C} , Θ_{S} collective and cyclic pitch inflow ratio advance ratio, $\frac{U}{\Omega r}$ density of air rotor solidity, he σ τ_{o}, τ_{l} time constants

 ϕ inflow angle

 γ rotor azimuth angle, $\gamma = \Omega t$

 Ω angular speed at the axes of rotation

 $\omega_{\mathbf{9}}$ pitch frequency

(°) $\frac{d}{dt}$ ()

 $(*) \qquad \frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d} \gamma} \ (\) \ = \frac{1}{\Omega} \, \frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d} t} \ (\)$

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